



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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For Immediate Release:  
Dec. 2, 2014

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### Holiday Recycling tips from DEQ

BATON ROUGE - "Tis the season to be jolly" and tis the season to create more waste and garbage than any other. Louisiana, like the rest of the nation, produces more garbage in December than any other month. A little planning ahead of time can reduce the amount of trash that goes to the landfills and reuse can even generate useful items. You can "Be the Solution" and have a more waste-free holiday season by following a few simple tips from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.

When you prepare for the coming holidays, think green: reduce, reuse and recycle. Wrapping paper is frequently not recyclable so try some other innovative ideas. Wrap a gift in a gift such as a scarf, bandana, dishtowel or cloth shopping bag. Comic pages and flyers reuse paper and are still recyclable. Reusing old materials can be creative and result in an attractive package. Last year's Christmas and holiday cards can be used in crafts and as ornaments.

Before the holidays is a perfect time to clean out some of the clutter and unused items in your home. If you have outgrown toys and clothing, consider donating them to charitable organizations that reuse them. Discarded electronics (computers, copiers, fax machines, printers, and monitors) may be donated to a local nonprofit agency, parent-teacher association or the Capital Area Corporate Recycling Council who provides computers to schools, families and nonprofits. Visit the council's website at [www.cacrc.com](http://www.cacrc.com) for details. One man's clutter is another person's treasure. Check the recycled content and life of the gift when purchasing. Sometimes donating to a charity, non-profit or buying a green, locally produced gift or giving a homemade heart gift fits the environmental bill.

Your Christmas tree is another way to take the environment into account, purchasing or replacing old incandescent tree lights with energy efficient LED lights saves energy and money. The old ones can be recycled at [www.holidayleds.com](http://www.holidayleds.com). If you buy an artificial tree it doesn't have to be discarded. If you decide on a live tree, you can plant it after the holidays. Cut trees, usually collected in early January, are ground up into compost or mulch. You can find information about seasonal pickups and recycling at the East Baton Rouge Parish Recycling website: <http://brgov.com/recycle>. Many parishes will have programs to recycle Christmas trees, but to recycle a tree, you have to be sure it is prepared correctly. If you have a cut tree, remember that tinsel, flocking and decorations must be removed before recycling.

Recycle packaging materials such as cardboard and plastic foam peanuts and recycle used batteries. For information on recycling plastic foam peanuts, or if you are a retailer interested in foam peanut recycling, go to [www.loosefillpackaging.com/hotline](http://www.loosefillpackaging.com/hotline). Buy rechargeable batteries for toys, cameras and gadgets. When those batteries no longer hold a charge, call the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation at 800-8-BATTERY, or go to their website at [www.rbrc.org](http://www.rbrc.org) for information on the nearest battery-recycling drop off location.

Have a safe holiday season and remember to never burn wrapping paper or Christmas trees in the fireplace. For more recycling ideas, go to: [www.deq.louisiana.gov/recycling](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/recycling).